

The University of Chicago

THE ALL-NEGRO SOCIETY IN
OKLAHOMA

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
MARCH, 1946

By
MOZELL C. HILL

Reprinted from
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THE ALL-NEGRO COMMUNITIES OF OKLAHOMA:
THE NATURAL HISTORY OF A SOCIAL
MOVEMENT

THE ALL-NEGRO COMMUNITIES OF OKLAHOMA: THE NATURAL HISTORY OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT¹

I

The development of all-Negro communities in Oklahoma was an integral part of the Great Western Movement in this country during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In order to comprehend thoroughly the establishment of the all-Negro society on the Oklahoma frontier, it becomes necessary to relate this racial movement in which Negroes attempted to "escape" the social pressure of the dominant white culture, to the larger social movement toward the Great West.

It was Frederick Jackson Turner² who insisted upon a naturalistic interpretation of American history. American development, he explained, has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West, the existence of an area of free land, its continuous retirement, and the advance of American settlement westward. Turner points out that the peculiarity of American social forms resulted from the necessity of continuous social changes due to the nature of frontier developments. American institutions have been constrained to adjust to the changes of a restless, mobile, and expanding people.

Turner, moreover, has shown the significance of the frontier for sociological inquiry, especially for the study of comparative social organization. He shows conclusively that the points of view of sectionalism, provincialism, racialism, and perhaps, regionalism, do not penetrate the

¹ This paper is a portion of a dissertation, "The All-Negro Society in Oklahoma," submitted to the Faculty of the Department of Sociology, University of Chicago, as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, March 1946.

² Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920.

heart of social organization of the American society. He stresses that the problems of the frontier are nothing less than the problems contained in the natural history of American social organization. In placing emphasis upon the importance of the frontier (the West) as an object of sociological investigation, Turner wrote:

"The West (frontier), at bottom is a form of society rather than an area. It is the term applied to the region whose social conditions result from the application of older institutions and ideas to the transforming influences of free land. By this application, a new environment is suddenly entered, freedom of opportunity is opened, the cake of custom is broken, and new activities, new lines of growth, new institutions, and new ideals are brought into existence."³

An indispensable requisite of a frontier society is a dissatisfied, restless, people who are desirous of a new way of life. There must be among them a natural yearning for "subduing the wilderness" in order to shape new institutions and find new and better horizons of living. The pioneer is one who rebels against the conventionally established habits of living. Accordingly, he seeks new ways for personal development, freedom from social and governmental constraints, new sources of wealth and the innumerable opportunities which he envisions on the frontier.

After the Civil War, the South passed through an economic and social upheaval. The cake of custom had been broken and old institutional forms were no longer adequate as agencies of social control. Consequently, crowd-mindedness was pronounced and the behavior of the people was not constrained in the routinized channels of established social convention. Both Negroes and whites were caught in this general discontent and restlessness, and the South was characterized by lawlessness and terrorism. The literature re-

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 205-206. This frame of reference has been recognized and stressed by several sociologists, notably Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2nd Edition, 1924. Pp. 16-24.

garding the plight of the newly freed slaves during Reconstruction points out unmistakably the restlessness, violence, and general disorder resulting from the social upheaval due to the backwash of the war. Whippings, burnings, discriminations, and disfranchisements initiated and carried on what seemed to the newly freed a reign of terror of such brutality and vindictiveness that Negroes and whites began to feel themselves in a desperate impasse.

It was within this setting of social unrest that Negroes and whites began exploring the possibility of a "new home"—"a land of freedom and opportunity"—a "Utopian society." While the westward trek of Negroes in search of freedom, which culminated in the establishment of all-Negro communities in Oklahoma came later, it was, nevertheless, closely related to the great westward march of whites. Negroes and whites who left the South had several things in common. First, both racial groups, dissatisfied with the Old South, were yearning for a better place to live. Secondly, both had an abounding faith in the frontier where land was free and opportunities unlimited. And finally, both groups were racially intolerant toward each other, believing that separation of the races was not only expedient and desirable, but, indeed, absolutely essential. It is for the latter reason that the Oklahoma frontier developed two separate "caste-like" societies—an all-white society with a series of separate white communities, and an all-Negro society, with its separate Negro communities. Between these two polar, racially homogeneous types, however, there have also developed varying bi-racial combinations.

However, there were certain distinguishing features in the establishment of all-Negro communities on the Oklahoma frontier. Generally, the organization of communities on the Western frontier followed three distinct patterns: (1) "Utopian" communities, established by various religious and socio-political sects in search of freedom, and attempting to escape the social restrictions of the larger so-

ciety; (2) "Boom Towns," established as a result of the spontaneous rushes for gold, land, oil, and other natural wealth offered on the frontier; and (3) "Promoters' Enterprises," usually established through the promotional and enterprising efforts of individuals and groups who deliberately encouraged restless persons to migrate into the new area. In this connection, the movement of Negroes into the Oklahoma frontier, and the subsequent organization of all-Negro communities, had the elements of these three patterns of community organization. Thus, they are, in effect, combinational "utopian escape," "spontaneous boom towns," which have been facilitated by "promotional schemes."

II

The "Great Black March Westward" into the Oklahoma frontier, which began about 1890, and reached its climax about 1910, followed a fairly uniform pattern. In fact, it can be represented as a social movement.⁴ C. A. Dawson and W. E. Gettys,⁵ in constructing a scheme for the study of social movements, suggest that all social movements pass through four stages in their evolution—the preliminary stage of unrest, the popular stage of collective excitement, the formal stage, and finally, institutionalization.

As regards the first stage, it has been pointed out that the all-Negro society was the culmination of the social unrest with accompanying crises during the Reconstruction Era. Thus, the movement began as a result of the social and personal disorganization due to the breaking up of an

⁴ Herbert Blumer conceptualizes a social movement as a "collective enterprise to establish a new order of life. . . . One which has a well defined objective or goal which it seeks to reach. . . . In this effort it develops an organization and structure, making it essentially a society." "Collective Behavior" in *Principles of Sociology*, edited by Robert E. Park, New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1939, pp. 255-78.

⁵ Carl A. Dawson and Warner E. Gettys, *Introduction to Sociology*, New York: Ronald Press, 1929.

old traditional social order. The prevailing organizational mores of the Old South no longer operated to maintain a cohesive society. Hence, the units of the Old South were broken into essentially crowd-minded groups. These milling groups frequently became aggressive crowds characterized by intermittent mob violence. The behavior of the people in this instance was the product of a collective impulse to act. Although their behavior, for the most part, was random, ill-defined, and, in a large degree non-symbolic, it nevertheless represented the aroused discontent, disappointments, restlessness and frustration among the people.

Fourteen ex-slaves and pioneers in the Oklahoma all-Negro society were interviewed as a part of this study. All were emphatic and emotional in relating the dissatisfaction and restlessness among whites and Negroes in the South, when they migrated into the new frontier. Representative of the entire group, in respect to the restlessness and uneasiness among Negroes, are the statements given below:

"After de war set us free, my pappy moved us away from Louisiana. We found a college of colored folks gittin' t'gether to leave for Oklahoma where dey say things was much better. We had covered wagons, and let me tell you, I walked nearly all de way from Louisiana to Oklahoma. . . . We came searchin' for education and freedom. . . . They never did jist come out and tell us we was free. When we found out we was free, we left. . . . After they set us free, it was awful. The Patrollers would catch 'em and have 'em whipped. I seen that done lots of times. There was some wood stocks and they would put a 'darky' in this and strap him down, take off his clothes and give him 25 or 50 licks, 'cording to what he done."⁶

The stage of "collective excitement" in the natural history of the all-Negro ideology must be related to the actual opening of the Oklahoma frontier and the migration of thousands of Negroes into the territory. In this stage, there emerged the racial agitator—a leader, who excited the Ne-

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 798-99.

groes to the extent of arousing new impulses and feelings, and suggesting new directions for their impulses. During this stage of the movement, the behavior of the Negroes became that of an organized crowd. The inter-stimulation between them was brought under the control of the collective excitement.

The Oklahoma frontier was one of three races: whites, Indians, and Negroes. In addition to possessing three distinct racial groups, each with its own peculiar customs and racial myths, the frontier was almost entirely lacking in institutional structure. There was little manifest authority, and therefore little or no social control. However, with the opening of the territories and reservations,⁷ a large number of Negroes migrated into the Oklahoma frontier. It is further suggestive and of significant import that only a few Negroes migrated to the territories from the North. Most of the pioneers came from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Southeast Missouri.⁸

Although the migrants had sharpened their objectives beyond the restlessness of the first stage, there still remained considerable milling, circular behavior, and random and aimless behavior among them. Notwithstanding, the movement had now developed to the point where the goals of the wanderers were slowly becoming defined. During this collective excitement, however, there were numerous conflicts between the races growing out of the nature of the frontier and the traditional sentiments of the pioneers. This further accentuated the dissatisfactions of the Negroes with the bi-racial society. The intensity of the conflict between the three racial groups can be gleaned by viewing

⁷ See James S. Buchanan and Edward E. Dale, *A History of Oklahoma*. New York: Row, Peterson and Co., 1924.

⁸ The Oklahoma Division of the Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration, unpublished manuscript, files Oklahoma Historical Society.

excerpts from a few of the reports appearing in newspapers and magazines in the territory at that time.⁹

"The Choctaws are driving the Negroes out of that Nation. Anyone employing a colored servant is subjected to a \$50.00 fine."¹⁰

"In the southern portion of the Oklahoma Territory, White Cap-pers are running the Negroes out of the country. At Norman, not one Negro remains."¹¹

"Major H. C. Miller has issued a proclamation to the citizens of Sapulpa stating that if they are determined to rid the town of Negro population, let them do so in a peaceable law-abiding manner."¹²

"A vigilance committee of the citizens of Waurika posted notices to the Negroes to vacate the community within 24 hours."¹³

"One Negro and one white man, wounded in an effort of a number of whites to run Negroes out of Claremore. The white man was wounded fatally."¹⁴

The stage of Formal Organization evolved almost imperceptibly from the social contagion and frustration of Negroes described in the preceding stage. By this time, the motives which inspired the movement of Negroes into the territory became fixed and its aims were more poignantly circumscribed. For the first time, there was concrete organization around leaders with various programs. Thus, the social organization of the all-Negro society began to evolve.

Perhaps the most effective Negro leader fostering the all-Negro ideology was Edwin P. McCabe, who as early as 1890 had proposed Oklahoma as a Negro state.¹⁵ McCabe,

⁹ Over 200 separate articles have been collected.

¹⁰ *The Lexington Leader*, November 28, 1891.

¹¹ *The Kingfisher Press*, September 24, 1896.

¹² *The Indian Chieftain*, August 29, 1901

¹³ *The Beaver Journal*, November 29, 1902.

¹⁴ *The Cherokee Messenger*, August, 1905.

¹⁵ *The Indian Chieftain*, March 6, 1890—"There is an attempt by Negroes throughout the United States to make Oklahoma a Negro state, occupied and governed exclusively by Negro people. Agitators are going about in different states persuading Negroes to immigrate to Oklahoma. At present, there are about 25,000 people in Oklahoma, 15,000 are Negroes. Attempts will be made to raise the members of Negro population to 40,000 by the time the census is made."

who was deeply imbued with the idea of the separation of the races, labored vigorously for an all-Negro state. He was responsible for organizing Negroes and developing a literature which voiced the wishes and sentiments of the group; and, also for making an emotional appeal leading eventually to the establishment of a number of all-Negro communities in the territory. Concerning McCabe, the *New York Post*, in 1892, printed on the front page:

"The movement to make Oklahoma a Negro State, which the white settlers were at first disposed to ridicule, is being managed with a great deal of skill. The man who is engineering it is Edwin P. McCabe, ex-State Auditor of Kansas, who asked the Republicans of that state for a second term of office only to be cast out of the party. The political disappointments, together with a great deal of ostracism at Topeka, determined McCabe, who is said to be almost a white man in appearance and highly intellectual, to found a Negro state. He called to his side, the most intelligent Negroes . . . began organizing 'colonies' and executed the plan with so much energy that when Oklahoma was thrown open to settlement, 10,000 Negroes crossed the border to get a foothold in the new country. They came, of course, largely from southern states.

"To help the cause, McCabe established a newspaper in the interest of his race. This 'organ' he distributed all through the South as well as Oklahoma. It boldly advocated the plan of dispossessing the whites of political power. The idea fascinated the southern Negroes, and they continued to make up colonies in spite of the planters who saw the labor in their fields dwindling in number. At the present writing, there are seven large colonies of Negroes in Oklahoma, and within the next sixty days, there will be upward of sixty colonies established if McCabe's plans do not miscarry. There are said to be 200,000 Negroes in the South organized for settlement in Oklahoma. A few years may see two Senators at Washington."¹⁶

McCabe's plan in the beginning was to distribute Negroes so that a majority of black voters would be possible in each representative and senatorial district. Whenever a cabin or house became vacant, a Negro was housed by McCabe's managers. The opening of the Sac and Fox and Pottawatomie Indian Reservations, located near McCabe's

¹⁶ The Oklahoma Division of the Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration, unpublished manuscript. Files of Oklahoma Historical Society.

Townsites, to settlement in 1891¹⁷ aided his scheme tremendously. Hundreds of Negro families were arriving daily who were willing to undergo all kinds of hardships if they could secure forty acres of land, freedom, and "independence."

Due chiefly to the social resistances offered by whites and Indians, resulting in frequent clashes between the races, McCabe's scheme for a Negro state failed. However, old settlers give other reasons for the failure of McCabe's plan of colonization. Some say he was mysteriously slain; others that he "sold us down the river" after making "lots of money"; and still others say, "he died a disappointed man."

There were several other attempts at organization in the Oklahoma territory. With the failure of McCabe's plan to make Oklahoma a "heaven" for Negroes, and the increasing tension between races, Negro leaders began organizing groups to "escape" the white society through other colonizational proposals. Most of these movements did not get beyond the first stage; others developed to the point that they served to dislocate the Negro population in the territory. Numerous accounts of these colonizational proposals, most of which aborted in the embryonic stage, were discovered in newspapers and magazine accounts. Typical of these "escape" propositions are those which suggested that Negroes should return to Africa:

"George Washington, an aged Negro of Okmulgee, is preparing to call a state convention of Negroes to take up the proposition of colonizing Liberia with Oklahoma Negroes. After living under laws made and administered by Negroes for two years in Liberia, he believes the salvation of his race can be solved by returning to the native heath of the black man."¹⁸

"1,500 Negroes residing along the Fort Smith and Western Railway (led by Chief Sam) have completed arrangements to sail for Africa the first of the year."¹⁹

¹⁷ Buchanan and Dale, *op. cit.*, 212-215.

¹⁸ *The Indian Journal*, September 4, 1908.

¹⁹ *The Eufaula Democrat*, December 19, 1913.

Although these accounts of "escape" movements among Negroes on the Oklahoma frontier may appear to have been isolated instances of a restless group attempting to separate themselves from the dominant white group, they were actually closely related to larger and more inclusive nationalistic Negro movements which were prevalent at the turn of the century. Examples of such movements are: *The Universal Negro Improvement Association*, under the leadership of the West Indian doctor, Marcus Garvey; *The National Union for People of African Descent*, a movement which was proposing extraterritorial independence for Negroes; and *The National Movement for the Establishment of the Forty-ninth State*, which worked for an interdependent commonwealth like any other of the present 48 states of the United States. Thus, these Negro pioneers, who were sensitive to "Back-to-Africa" movements, were also responding to various ideas for solving the "race problem" which was national in scope. Negroes, in general, were acutely aware that emancipation had not solved the race problem, and, accordingly, were grasping for a solution through any feasible mechanism of escape.

However, after the endeavors to solve the "race problem" in the Oklahoma frontier had aborted, and after the various colonizational proposals failed to materialize, the only other alternative for separation from the dominant white caste within the horizon of the Negroes was the organization of separate communities within the territories. This would at least furnish psychic adjustments for the Negroes by helping them to escape the constant daily social pressure of the dominant white society. That the organization of the all-Negro communities was possible is inherent in the nature of the Oklahoma frontier in which the disposition of the public domain made cheap land available.

The all-Negro society is now in its final stage, that of institutionalization. This is to say, the movement has terminated into a form of social organization with a set of in-

stitutional practices that have a tendency to persist. The society is composed of numerous social institutions accompanied by formal and informal groupings, ceremonial behavior and ritual. Indeed, it is in this final stage of institutionalization of the all-Negro society's natural history that there has emerged a well defined group ideology. This racial ideology is giving permanence to the development and stability of the society. Under these conditions, it has become apparent that the movement has become established, it has become institutionalized. In other words, the all-Negro society which had its inception as a special social movement, starting with the social unrest during Reconstruction, and passing more or less through the characteristic stages of a social movement, has culminated into a number of recognized, separate, racially homogeneous communities.

III

There are approximately 25 all-Negro communities in Oklahoma, but only 10 have been investigated by the writer,²⁰ and only the first five listed below are considered in this study. However, all these separate communities have developed along with the colonization of the Great West and constitute "an all-Negro society." The Negroes who had a hand in the establishment of these communities were pre-occupied with pioneer ideals. They were a restless, dissatisfied people who had a craving for conquering the wilderness in order to shape a new society. Thus, they rebelled against the conventional folk practices and became racial agitators influencing other Negroes to seek new ways for personal development, new opportunities for wealth, freedom of opportunity, and freedom from white domination.

The more aggressive Negro pioneers of the Oklahoma frontier, while restless and yearning for new spheres in

²⁰ Boley, Langston, Taft, Rentiesville, Tatums, Summit, Vernon, Redbird, Clearview, and Wybark.

living, were also in many instances unscrupulous "land grabbers." These self-appointed leaders were able to exploit the desires of Negroes for escaping the social pressure of whites through propaganda programs for the organization of all-Negro townsites in their recently acquired properties.

A brief description of the organization of one of these all-Negro towns will reveal the pioneer spirit of Negroes at the turn of the century. It will also show the desire for "freedom of opportunity," the new lines of thought, and the frontier ideals which characterized Negroes who purchased townsites in the new frontier towns. Moreover, this account will evidence the method by which the aggressive Negro "land grabbing" pioneers exploited the sensitivities of Negroes migrating into the "wilderness." Since virtually every all-Negro community in Oklahoma followed the same general pattern in becoming institutionalized, a brief sketch of the organization of one of them will serve the purpose of this paper.

The oldest of these towns is Langston, an incorporated all-Negro community with a population of 514. It is eleven miles east of Guthrie, Oklahoma's first state capital, in Logan County, and about 40 miles northeast of Oklahoma City, the present capital of the state. The town adjoins Langston University, the state college for Negroes, on the southeast side of the campus, separated by State Highway Number 33. The fact that the state college for Negroes is located there makes the community an educational and cultural center for the Negroes of the state. It is also the center for most of the political activity of the state about which the interest of Negroes is affected.

The organization of the community dates back to 1891 through the promotion efforts of Edwin P. McCabe, previously mentioned. McCabe planned the town as a "New Eldorado" where the "black man was to prosper and rule supreme in his own community." McCabe had pur-

chased 160 acres of what is now the southeast corner of the town, from Charles H. Robbin, a white citizen of Guthrie, in 1890. This tract of land was sold in lots and another 160 acres was purchased by McCabe which is now the northeast section of the community.

During this period, agents of the McCabe Town Company became runners throughout the southern states selling contracts for lots. The amount paid for contracts by Negroes secured a railroad ticket to Guthrie, where the company's office was located, and the choice of one or more town lots upon the purchaser's arrival. The title to these lots could never pass to any white man, and upon them no white man could ever reside or conduct a business according to the literature of the promoting company.

A newspaper, *The Langston Herald*, edited by McCabe, was circulated throughout the South. In this paper, buildings of massive structures were pictured to give an idea of how Langston was expected to grow within a few years. This was misleading to many of the purchasers because it appeared to the readers that these buildings actually existed in the new town. However, they were disappointed upon their arrival, for they found only a few tents scattered over a tract of land. Nevertheless, this publication served its purpose.

One of the pioneer settlers in relating the organization of the community stated:

"For some time, every few days the Santa Fe train from Texas would pull in a couple of coaches of some southern railroad loaded to the roof with Negro immigrants, Langston bound. They brought their families and their household goods. It was really something to see. Some even came in wagons and lots on foot. Lots of people who came here were so disappointed that they went back home. It took real enterprising folks to stick it out. There wasn't but one building in town so most of the families lived in tents while houses were being built for them."

The community apparently thrived and grew during the first years of settlement. The opening of the Sac and Fox

lands to settlement gave many Negroes residing in the community an opportunity to participate in the "run" for free land. Many of the restless migrants moved on to new and more fertile fields before becoming established. Pioneers of the community declare that the population at one time exceeded 2,000, but the desire of Negroes to lay claim in the Indian reservation, as well as many drifting to larger communities in search of employment, depleted it to less than 1,000 by 1900.

The town was named for John M. Langston, a Negro congressman from Virginia during the fifty-first Congress. He served from September, 1890, to March, 1891.

The ability of the community to survive and become institutionalized was due in no small degree to the passage of a bill by the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature creating a state educational institution for Negroes on March 12, 1897. The institution designated as the Colored Agricultural and Normal University of Oklahoma was later changed to Langston University and was located on 40 acres of land adjoining the community of Langston. This land was given to the State by the residents of the community who possessed a deep desire for increasing the educational opportunities of Negroes.

By way of summary, the data presented in this paper, in respect to the natural history of the all-Negro society in Oklahoma, show unmistakably and conclusively that the all-Negro society is essentially an "escape" society distinguished by a "sacred" racial ideology. It has been shown that the institutionalization of the society was part of the "Great Westward Expansion"—an all-inclusive social movement—which characterized that period of social unrest in American history after the Civil War. Southern Negroes and whites were captivated by this movement because of general discontent and restlessness among them during Reconstruction. They were, moreover, stimulated by the opportunities for starting life anew on the frontier. How-

ever, the Negroes who took part in the movement were also seeking to resolve their subordinate caste frustration. Besides, they were searching for a "Utopia" where they could live without enduring the social and psychological pressure of the superordinate white caste. When they arrived on the Oklahoma frontier scene in great masses, they discovered virtually the same inter-caste relations which had stimulated them to emigrate from the South. As an alternative to the many colonizational proposals for separation of the races, Negroes began voluntarily to isolate themselves in separate communities on the frontier as a means of escaping white domination. Thus, the all-Negro society in Oklahoma is the result of a social movement in which Negroes were attempting to solve the "race problem."

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A Comparative Study of Race Attitudes in the All-Negro Community in Oklahoma

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A Comparative Study of Race Attitudes in the All-Negro Community in Oklahoma¹

THE MAJOR PURPOSE of this discussion is to investigate the racial attitudes of Negroes who have voluntarily isolated themselves into separate racially homogeneous communities. Therefore, it appears appropriate to ascertain, through a comparative analysis of their racial attitudes, the ways in which individuals residing in all-Negro communities have internalized the ideology of their society. There are, accordingly, two key questions to be explored in this paper. First, how have individuals living in isolation from the dominant white society interiorized the basic meanings of social situations that revolve around their racial isolation, and what configurations of racial sentiments are to be found among them? The second question, more significant for the purpose of this investigation, refers to differences in the racial sentiments of Negroes residing in racially homogeneous societies from those of Negroes living in bi-racial societies. Thus, the fundamental question becomes: How do the basic racial attitudes of individuals in all-Negro communities in Oklahoma differ from those of Negroes residing in various bi-racial communities of the South?

In this connection, this paper takes for granted that the personal qualities of an individual are the products of his experiences with other individuals in a social environment. Thus, in a society that is different, the personal organization of the individuals who constitute that society will be different. Moreover, in a society where the inter-personal relations of an individual are limited and restricted to constant interaction with persons of like sentiments, distinctions in his personal qualities from individuals living in other societies will be enhanced.

The above assumptions suggest the following controlling hypothesis:

Due to the isolation and racial character of the all-Negro society as well as the corresponding lessening of social pressure from the dominant white society, and, due to the fact that there is a considerable degree of relaxation of emotional tension within the interaction system of the society, there are significant differences in respect to racial sentiments existing between Negroes of racially homogenous and racially mixed societies.

1. This paper is a portion of a dissertation, "The All-Negro Society in Oklahoma," submitted to the faculty of the Department of

Sociology, University of Chicago, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, March, 1946.

II

In order to test the hypothesis stated above, and to probe for definitive answers to the key questions of this investigation, a race attitude test was employed. The schedules for this test which were constructed by Charles S. Johnson and his associates, were prepared by the Thurstone technique and employed in the Negro Youth Study.² The scaling was in terms of degree of friendliness toward whites on one schedule, and toward Negroes on the other schedule. The scoring of the test is a combination of the Thurstone and the Likert methods.³

The Race Attitude Test is divided into two schedules, a Negro scale and a white scale. The first 32 questions relate to attitudes held concerning Negroes. Of the 64 questions in the test, only 26 are scored — thirteen which relate to attitudes held concerning Negroes and thirteen which relate to attitudes held concerning whites. The questions are the most unfavorable to whites and Negroes, respectively, and only true responses are scored. Therefore, a high score indicates an unfavorable attitude.

This test was administered to 245 high school boys and girls, ages 13 to 18, residing in three all-Negro communities in Oklahoma: Langston, Taft,

TABLE 1

Distribution of Race Attitude Scores for 245 High School Youth in Three All-Negro Communities: Langston, Taft, and Boley, by Number and Percent, for the White Scale.

RACE ATTITUDE SCORE	ALL-NEGRO COMMUNITIES			TOTAL	
	LANGSTON	TAFT	BOLEY	NUMBER	PERCENT
0	3	4	9	16	6.5
1	11	2	14	27	11.0
2	6	4	13	23	9.4
3	12	4	20	36	14.7
4	10	9	9	28	11.4
5	3	7	7	17	7.0
6	10	11	4	25	10.2
7	9	4	7	20	8.2
8	1	5	1	7	2.8
9	4	5	1	10	4.1
10	12	11	0	23	9.4
11	3	6	0	9	3.7
12	1	3	0	4	1.6
All Scores	85	75	85	245	100.0

and Boley. Table 1 indicates the distribution of the race attitude scores for these boys and girls. Over 50 per cent of these youth scored less than 5;

2. See Eli S. Marks, "The Standardization of a Race Attitude Test for Negro Youth," *The Journal of Social Psychology*, November, 1943, pp. 245-278.

3. L. L. Thurstone and E. J. Chave, *The Measurement of Attitude*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929; R. Likert, "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes," *Archives of Psychology*, June, 1932, No. 140.

and, only 14.7 per cent scored as high as 10. There is, however, a wide range in their responses; yet, the average score, 4.86, does not suggest a very favorable attitude toward whites. The standard deviation, which is 3.27, indicates considerable variation among these youth in their adjustment to the white race. Moreover, close scrutiny of the comparative scores between the three communities reveals degrees of differences in racial sentiments among them.

TABLE 2

Distribution of Race Attitude Scores for 766 High School Negro Youth Residing in a Southern Racially Mixed Community, Davidson County, Tennessee, by Number and Percent, for the White Scale*

RACE ATTITUDE SCORE	NUMBER	PERCENT
0	21	2.7
1	48	6.3
2	84	11.0
3	87	11.4
4	100	13.1
5	100	13.1
6	106	13.8
7	91	11.9
8	67	8.7
9	40	5.2
10	12	1.6
11	9	1.2
12	1	0.1
Totals	766	100.0

*Files of Charles S. Johnson.

Table 2 shows the distribution of race attitude scores for 766 high school youth living in a southern racially mixed community. Similarly to the boys and girls in the all-Negro communities, over 40 per cent of these youth scored less than 5; but a greater percentage had higher scores than the all-Negro youth. On the other hand, a smaller percentage scored over 10. The youth in the bi-racial society also reveal considerable variation in their responses. However, the average score (4.93) for this sample is higher than the all-Negro youth, which suggests that boys and girls in the all-Negro society are somewhat more favorable in their attitudes toward whites. This can be explained by the fact that the latter group is not under constant pressure of the dominant white caste which characterizes the daily living of Negroes in southern bi-racial societies. Accordingly, this difference between the two samples, in which boys and girls in the all-Negro society reflect a more favorable attitude toward whites in their responses, supports the controlling hypothesis of this investigation.

Perhaps a more adequate comparison can be obtained by an examination of Table 3 which compares the percentage scores of statements on the white scale of the Race Attitude Test which were endorsed by over 70 per cent of the 2,235 boys and girls in southern bi-racial societies

studied by Johnson with those of 245 boys and girls in the all-Negro society. The extent and degree of the feelings of both groups toward whites is suggested by the relative percentages which endorse favorable and unfavorable statements. For example, item one, "I think white people

TABLE 3

Percentage Scores of Statements on the White Scale of Race Attitude Test Endorsed by Over 70 Percent of 2,235 Youth Residing in Various Bi-Racial Societies and the Endorsements of 245 All-Negro Youth*

No. OF STATE- MENT	STATEMENT	PERCENT ENDORSING	
		YOUTH IN BI-RACIAL SOCIETIES*	YOUTH IN ALL-NEGRO SOCIETY
1.	I think white people could do more for colored people but they won't.....	91.3	89.3
2.	Sometimes white people make me mad, but they're no worse than other people.....	75.1	62.0
3.	White people call Negroes bad names.....	90.5	85.3
5.	Most of the big businesses are owned by white people.....	83.8	86.9
6.	White people will take care of a Negro who works hard and minds his own business.....	71.7	62.8
10.	Most white people make fun of Negroes and laugh at them....	80.6	70.7
13.	White people think all Negroes should be servants.....	78.7	63.7
20.	The white race has produced some of the best and some of the worst men in history.....	74.9	79.6
21.	There are all kinds of white people—some good and some bad.....	95.6	95.9
24.	White men have done wonderful things to make the United States a great country.....	83.6	72.6
25.	Sometimes I think white people treat Negroes all right and sometimes I don't.....	86.4	80.8
	Average.....	82.8	77.2

*Files of Charles S. Johnson.

could do more for colored people, but they won't," is endorsed by 91.3 per cent of Johnson's sample and 89.3 per cent of the boys and girls of the all-Negro society. On the other hand, the statement, "Most white people make fun of Negroes and laugh at them," is endorsed by 80.6 per cent of the youth in Johnson's sample, and 70.7 per cent of the all-Negro boys and girls. The difference as regards the latter statement indicates a much more favorable attitude toward whites among all-Negro society youth than those living in daily association with them.

There are, however, greater differences in the responses between these young people to certain statements on the white scale which suggest a stronger aversion for whites by the boys and girls in the all-Negro society. For instance, to the statement, "I'd rather be dead than ask a white man for anything," only 10.7 per cent of Johnson's samples endorse it; while 41.9 per cent of the youth in the all-Negro society sanction the attitude. There is also a wide difference in their responses to the category, "Negroes should hate all white people." In Johnson's sample, 14.7 per cent endorse it, and 54.2 per cent of the boys and girls in the all-

Negro society support it. These latter statements, however, were found to have a low reliability on the attitude scale, and were abandoned by Johnson in the standardization of the white scale. They reveal, nevertheless, the basic differences in kinds of sensitivities toward whites by the youth in the two studies. In these instances, the youth residing in close association with the dominant white group have much more favorable attitudes toward whites than do those living in voluntary segregation.

The value of these latter responses is perhaps more important for testing the controlling hypothesis of this investigation than those included in the scale. They give us significant indications of the kinds of differences of attitudes in the all-Negro and bi-racial societies. Moreover, they furnish us with important cues in regard to the complexity and ambivalence of racial sentiments. It is a fact, that the wide variations of the percentage responses to certain items in the test signify conclusively that there are differences in kinds of attitudes towards whites between the two groups.

The types of response expressed by Negro youth toward other Negroes, and toward themselves as members of a racial minority isolated from the dominant white society, is a more adequate index of their racial sentiments than those indicated on the white scale. The personalities of the young people in the all-Negro society are organized about values within their own racial group. This is not true for Negro youth who find themselves residing in the larger society dominated by whites. Here, the "center of gravity" is outside his race, and upon the values of the superordinate white caste.

TABLE 4

Distribution of Race Attitude Scores for 245 High School Youth in Three All-Negro Communities: Langston, Taft, and Boley, by Number and Percent, for the Negro Scale.

RACE ATTITUDE SCORE	ALL-NEGRO COMMUNITIES			TOTAL	
	LANGSTON	TAFT	BOLEY	NUMBER	PERCENT
0	8	4	9	21	8.2
1	16	7	10	33	13.7
2	13	15	8	36	14.7
3	9	12	7	28	11.4
4	8	10	14	32	13.1
5	9	5	12	26	10.7
6	6	6	6	18	7.3
7	9	8	7	24	9.9
8	3	3	5	11	4.5
9	2	4	5	11	4.5
10	0	1	2	3	1.2
11	2	0	0	2	.8
12	0	0	0	0	.0
Totals	85	75	85	245	100.0

Table 4 reveals the distribution of race attitude scores for 245 high

school youth in three all-Negro communities, Langston, Taft, and Boley, for the Negro scale. From a cursory examination of the table, it is noted that these youth are much more favorable toward their own race than they indicated for whites. The average score is only 3.93. The standard deviation is 2.68 which means that these youth are less confused, and show considerably less variation in their responses on the Negro scale.

TABLE 5

The Average Scores of Negro Youth in Southern Cities, a Border City, Northern Cities, and All-Negro Communities for the Negro Scale of the Race Attitude Tests*

LOCATION	NUMBER OF CASES	AVERAGE SCORES
*Southern Cities.....	1133	5.54
Atlanta, Ga.....	267	4.49
Fort Worth, Texas.....	247	5.45
Greensboro, N. C.....	153	5.87
Nashville, Tenn.....	211	6.23
New Orleans, La.....	255	5.59
*Border City		
Baltimore, Md.....	158	4.65
*Northern Cities.....	588	4.25
Chicago, Ill.....	208	3.41
New York, N. Y.....	142	3.94
Philadelphia, Pa.....	177	5.22
Springfield, Mass.....	61	4.82
All-Negro Society.....	245	3.93

*Files of Charles S. Johnson.

Table 5 shows the average scores of the youth from southern cities, a border city, and northern cities, compared with the 245 boys and girls responding to the Negro scale of the Race Attitude Test. It is noted, according to Johnson's data, that as Negro youth move north, they tend to be more favorable toward their own race. Hence, the deeper south that a Negro lives, the more likely he is to disapprove of his own race. The average score on the Negro scale in southern cities (Atlanta, Ga., Fort Worth, Texas, Greensboro, N. C., Nashville, Tenn., New Orleans, La.) is 5.54, in a border city (Baltimore, Md.) 4.65, and in northern cities (Chicago, Philadelphia, New York City, Springfield, Mass.) the average score is reduced to 4.25. This can be compared with an average score of only 3.93 for the all-Negro society.

In comparing the average scores of these two samples, it is readily noted that the all-Negro youth are more inclined to favor their own race than Negro youth residing in the bi-racial urban communities, with the exception of Chicago and New York City. However, when the scores for Chicago and New York are averaged along with those of other northern cities, it appears that even Negro youth living in the North are less favorable in their intra-racial feelings than the all-Negro youth.

TABLE 6

The Average Scores of Negro Youth in Southern Rural Counties and All-Negro Communities, for the Negro Scale of the Race Attitude Test.

LOCATION	NUMBER OF CASES	AVERAGE SCORES
*All Counties.....	2096	7.26
Johnson, N. C.....	494	7.41
Davidson, Tenn.....	171	5.17
Shelby, Tenn.....	367	8.03
Coahoma, Miss.....	247	8.20
Madison, Ala.....	169	6.44
Macon, Ala.....	237	7.33
Greene, Ga.....	115	7.54
Bolivar, Miss.....	296	6.98
All-Negro Society.....	245	3.93

*Files of Charles S. Johnson.

Still further distinctions in personal qualities are indicated by comparing the average scores for the Negro scale of the Race Attitude Test between Negro youth residing in southern rural, racially mixed communities, and the boys and girls in the all-Negro society. Table 6 reveals that the scores for young people living in the rural South are extremely high, suggesting that their personalities are organized around values outside their own racial group. For example, the average score for all the southern localities included in the study is 7.26. The highest score (8.20) is computed for the boys and girls living in Mississippi and the lowest score (5.17) for those residing in Tennessee. However, all the scores for these Negro youth residing in rural bi-racial situations, are sufficiently greater than those of the all-Negro youth to be more than three times the standard-error-of-the-difference. In fact, in two localities, the differences between the average scores are greater than 10 times the standard-error-of-the-difference.

Finally, distinctions between the two samples can be shown by the percentage responses to certain statements marked as true regarding Negroes. To the item, "Negroes are always fighting and cutting each other up," 81.2 per cent of Johnson's sample checked this as true, and only 13.2 of the all-Negro youth agree with the statement. "Negroes are cowards," "Negroes are the meanest people in the world," and "If you don't know who committed a crime, you can always bet it was a Negro," are statements with which less than 5 per cent of the all-Negro youth agree, while 30.3, 12.1, and 40.0 per cent of the youth in bi-racial communities confirm them, respectively. Of crucial significance, then, is the fact, that Negro youth in these all-Negro communities reject almost completely all items stereotyping Negroes as: cowards, contemptible, criminal, belligerent, et cetera. What these young people are rejecting is the concept of the Negro as a lower-class person. In this connection, the boys and girls in these all-Negro communities are reacting as middle-

class or potentially middle class people, and their conception of the Negro is that of a middle-class person.

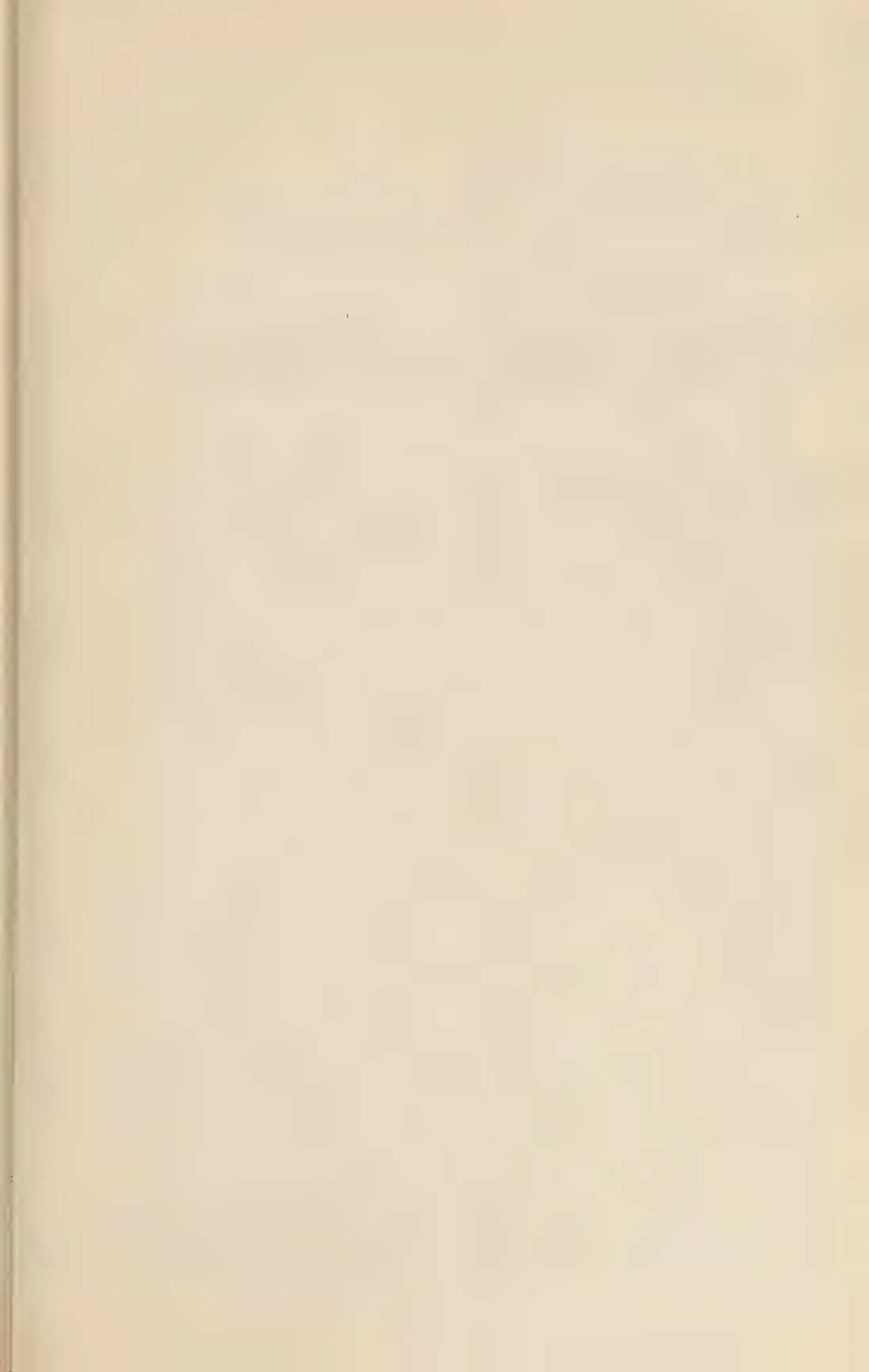
It is not claimed that these data show definitive and conclusive differences in degrees of favorableness and unfavorableness of attitudes between Negroes in bi-racial and racially homogeneous societies. Rather, it is pertinent to point out the kinds of attitudinal patterns and personal profiles between them. These data indicate clearly that there are sharp differences of patterns of attitudes. One of these differences stands out boldly among others. The residents of the all-Negro society display consistently in their talk and responses to the attitude test, an attitude of avoidance of whites. This "avoidance pattern" is part of the personal organization of every individual residing in the all-Negro society. It is, then, the "avoidance" question which shapes the personal qualities and racial sentiments of Negroes living in a separate culture. This difference in attitudes goes back to the kinds of social situations and social structures in which the all-Negro personality develops. What all this signifies is that the communities in which these young people have been brought up are dominated by middle-class standards. Furthermore, in the southern bi-racial community, the Negro middle-class is composed largely of compliant Negroes who strive to convince whites they are different from the mass of lower-class Negroes. Besides, these middle-class Negroes even internalize this notion that Negroes in general are low-class, criminal, irresponsible, child-like, worthless, belligerent, et cetera. The members of the all-Negro communities, on the other hand, are under no necessity of either saying or believing any such thing about their race. They do not have to state their own difference from lower-class people in racial terms. As a matter of fact, the very nature of the social structure of the all-Negro society reduces class tension and makes possible a social atmosphere of equalitarianism.

Furthermore, these data support the proposition that when Negroes are not under the constant pressure of the dominant white society, there is a relaxation of racial tension among them. The all-Negro personality does not condemn whites as strongly as young people living in intimate association with them. On the other hand, the data suggest that neither do they approve of whites any stronger than other Negro youth. There is more ambivalence in the attitudes toward whites by the youth residing in the larger society. Negroes in the larger society seem to be more mentally preoccupied with the white caste and the "run of their attentions" appears to be focussed upon their inferior caste-like position.

Concerning the results of the Negro scale of the Race Attitude Test, there is more race pride and greater racial solidarity shown by the boys and girls in the all-Negro society. They have a higher regard for their own race and tend to blindly endorse favorable statements, and con-

demn derogatory remarks about Negroes. The young people in the larger society, except those living in Northern cities, are interestingly and significantly inconsistent in their responses toward Negroes. They tend to be critical of disorderly behavior of Negroes with respect to such things as fighting and drinking; and they show a strong preference for white employers, and lean toward the stereotype that Negroes have criminal tendencies.

Thus, it may be stated as a conclusive generalization that an individual growing up in the all-Negro society will have practically the same attitudes toward whites as any other American Negro, except that his are motivated by an "avoidance pattern." He will neither approve nor disapprove whites nearly so strongly as Negroes in the larger society. He is, nevertheless, conscious of white dominations of the larger society and has channelized his sentiments toward them much the same as Negroes not voluntarily segregated. On the other hand, an individual residing in the all-Negro society will have a much higher regard for Negroes. He will be more equalitarian in his attitudes toward them, and thus, more favorable in his expression toward his race. It appears safe to conclude that the all-Negro youth have a higher opinion of Negroes, due to the absence of pressure of the white man, combined with their essentially middle-class ideology.



A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE ALL-NEGRO SOCIETY IN OKLAHOMA*

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THIS paper proposes to examine, comparatively, the social structures of the all-Negro society in Oklahoma. The main effort is directed toward an understanding of the formal and informal groupings by which the all-Negro society regulates the life of its individual members as compared with those groupings typical of Negroes residing in bi-racial societies in the South.

The major hypothesis upon which this discussion rests is that there are differences, not only in the personal motivations of individuals residing in isolation from the direct influence of the dominant white society, but, there are in addition, significant differences among Negroes in social organization in respect to class structure, color motivation, family patterns, political and educational structurings, from those Negroes accustomed to living in societies controlled by the superordinate white race. This hypothesis is based upon the premise that Negroes live at a high level of emotional tension in the United States. This tacit assumption stems from the character of race relations in this country which involves a "white superiority-Negro inferiority" character.

It is proposed, therefore, by a comparative examination of the social organization and institutional structures of the all-Negro society; by a comparative study of the personal characteristics of the members who fulfill institutional offices; and by analyzing the interrelations among them as

well as their interaction with whites, that new points of departure and a more fruitful frame of reference will be suggested for a consideration of race relations in the United States.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND CLASS STRUCTURE

Although the members of the all-Negro society constitute a strongly organized "caste-like" group with social sanctions prohibiting intimate outer-caste relation, this racial society is not a homogeneous one. Within its social organization, there is a class hierarchy which is but a value system for differentiating and classifying its members into social ranks. In fact, the society has not only set up various roles or functions of participating members, but has linked with expected roles, degrees of rights, privileges, duties, and power. Thus, the all-Negro society maintains a status system which extends into a class organization.

The class structure of the all-Negro society can best be represented as a pyramid-like structure (Fig. 1). It is convenient to compare the class structure of the all-Negro society with one presented by Warner for whites in "Yankee City" (Fig. 2); and also, to compare the development of class structuring found when the two castes are living in close association (Fig. 3).¹ Figure 1, which represents the class structure of the all-Negro society, is considerably flattened when compared with those for "Yankee City" and "Old

¹ Warner emphasizes that his diagram is not (and neither is Figure 1) intended to portray quantitative organization and relationships. They only indicate the relative positions in vertical space of the societal structures.

* This paper is a portion of a dissertation "The All-Negro Society in Oklahoma," submitted to the Faculty of the Department of Sociology, University of Chicago, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, March 1946.

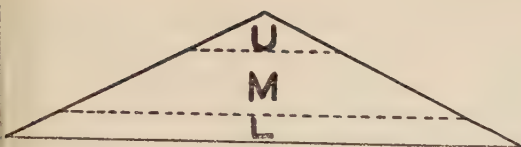


FIG. 1. THE PYRAMID STRUCTURE OF THE CLASS ORGANIZATION OF THE ALL-NEGRO SOCIETY

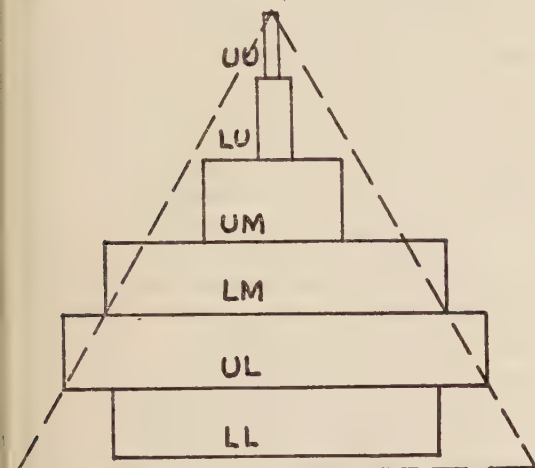


FIG. 2. THE CLASS STRUCTURE OF A WHITE SOCIETY "YANKEE CITY" AS REPRESENTED BY W. LLOYD WARNER AND ASSOCIATES

See W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 88.

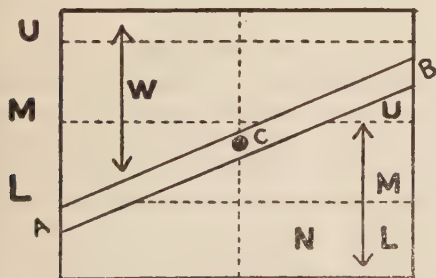


FIG. 3. RELATION BETWEEN THE CASTE SYSTEM AND THE CLASS SYSTEM IN A BI-RACIAL SOUTHERN COMMUNITY, "OLD CITY," AS PRESENTED BY W. LLOYD WARNER IN THE INTRODUCTION TO *Deep South* (CHICAGO: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1941) p. 10.

City." This is due to the fact that within the structure of the all-Negro society, there is an underlying equalitarian ideology. The latter is so strong that on the surface there appears to be no class hierarchy. However, upon closer observa-

tion, social classes are found to be present although less sharply defined than in "Old City" and "Yankee City."

In figure 1, it can be observed that only three classes are represented on the diagram—upper, middle, and lower. Also, the upper class and the lower class occupy only a small portion of the pyramid, while the middle class constitutes by far the largest section of the pyramid.

When figure 1 is compared with the Negro pyramid in figure 3, it becomes apparent that the class structures are quite different. In the first place, there are a greater number of persons in the upper class and fewer in the lower classes. In the second place, the middle class, which probably would be defined in the bi-racial society as an upper lower class, maintains, nevertheless, a middle class consciousness. They retain the same respectability usually associated with upper middle class status. The fact that this group constitutes the greatest space on the social pyramid means that the social structuring is different. Finally, no sharp lines can be drawn between the three classes listed in figure 1, because each group shades imperceptibly into the other. This reveals that the all-Negro class structure has much less vertical extension than the class structure in "Old City." Also, it indicates that there is greater mobility and fluidity within the all-Negro class structures when compared with a class system of Negroes living in association with the white caste.

A comparative analysis of these class structures brings into focus several points of differences between the status systems in bi-racial societies in the South and the all-Negro society in Oklahoma. These dissimilar salient features in class motivations stem from the fact that the all-Negro society is relatively free from the constant social pressure of the dominant white society. Moreover, the all-Negro society is characterized fundamentally by an equalitarian ideology which was taken over from the stereotype suggesting a homogeneous Negro group. This idea that "all Negroes are alike" has been manipulated by the residents in the interest of social cohesion. Such common expressions as: "we're all alike here," "we don't have no classes," and "there ain't no differences among us," tend to maintain and strengthen racial and social solidarity. This is obviously a contrast when compared to the social atmosphere among Negroes living in southern bi-racial societies. The class structure of the latter is characterized by a struggle among

Negroes to stress differentiations rather than similarities among themselves.

Another distinctive feature of the class system of the all-Negro society pertains to the upper or elite class consisting of those who have achieved economic security, political influence, and professional status. This group forms an upper class in a truer sense than could be possible in a racially mixed southern community because they literally "run" the affairs of the society. Gunnar Myrdal points out, for example, that in the southern bi-racial community, the dominant white caste has an obvious interest in promoting to positions of leadership and high status, the accommodating Negro who is willing to assist whites in controlling the Negro masses. He shows that leadership conferred upon a Negro by whites is fundamentally directed toward fostering disintegration rather than cohesiveness among Negroes.²

A further point of distinction is that there is a minimum of lower class frustration in the all-Negro society as evidenced by harmonious relations between the lower and upper classes. This is revealed by the ease of inter- and intra-class communication, the low crime rate, and conventional sex mores among the lower classes. In this connection, Myrdal presents a contrasting analysis of lower class Negroes in bi-racial societies by showing that incentives to personal accomplishments and improvements are not favorable; standards of industry and honesty are generally low; aggression and violence are neither rare nor censored by community disapproval; and, the lower-class Negroes little respect for law and justice.³

Still another difference between the class structures is the relatively small amount of exploitation of lower class members of the all-Negro society by those of the upper class. It is notorious that the system of racial etiquette of the South makes it necessary for upper-class Negroes to exploit the lower classes in order to maintain prestige and status with the white caste.⁴ The members of the upper class in the all-Negro society, on the other hand, must minimize the abuse of lower classes in order not to cut off the basis of their own prestige.

² Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1944) pp. 721-729.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 701.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 721.

An additional and more poignant discriminatory feature of the class systems is the incipient middle class consciousness which permeates the entire all-Negro society. Virtually every person thoroughly imbued with the all-Negro ideology is a social conformist. Unconventional behavior is frowned upon and not tolerated. Those who persist in violating the organizational mores of the society are ostracized and often encouraged, and indeed sometimes forced, to leave the community. This unquestionably is not the case for a large percentage of Negroes residing in bi-racial communities in the South. The crucial point of difference in this instance is the fact that in bi-racial communities, only whites would have the power to drive anyone from the community, while in all-Negro communities, the Negro elite can exercise moral mandates independent of whites. This may account for the middle class ideology which pervades among the residents of these racially homogeneous communities.

Finally, the lowest group in the all-Negro society is aware of its potency in the class structure. However, the members make no attempt to organize and become articulate as a class group. Indeed, it would be difficult to organize this lower group, for there are few dissatisfactions and frustrations among them. Moreover, they tend to develop close identifications with members of the upper groups, and accordingly, are friendly toward them.

COLOR MOTIVATION

In their analysis of the importance of complexion in the social structure of Negroes in "Old City," Allison Davis and Burleigh Gardner emphasized the fact that Negroes having the lightest skin, hair of Caucasian type, and other "Nordic" features are accorded the highest position in the class structure of the Negro caste.⁵ This raises the question of the significance of color in the social structure of the all-Negro society. Since the elements of color and physical features have been observed by many social scientists to be important criteria of social differentiation among Negroes in bi-racial societies, the basic question becomes: Do the same factors operate in the class structure when Negroes are living in relative isolation from the white caste? In other words, how does color

⁵ Allison Davis, Burleigh Gardner, and Mary Gardner, *Deep South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), p. 235.

function in class motivation in the all-Negro society in comparison with that of Negroes in bi-racial societies?

As Davis and Gardner discovered in "Old City," it was likewise observed in the all-Negro society, that one's complexion plays an important part in determining the role and "standing" of the individual. Moreover, it was discovered that color has positive symbolic values inherent in the structure of the society, which is, in turn, internalized by individuals. Thus, color is deeply engrained in the ideology of the all-Negro society. However, in contrast to the high status accorded light skin in bi-racial societies, the color structuring in the all-Negro society is slanted so as to disfavor light complexion and to give the preference to the darker brother.

In response to the categories, "Which color would you like best to be," and "Which color would you like least to be," which were included in a color inventory schedule, 417 youth in all-Negro communities show a strong preference to be neither black nor white. In fact, they show a very strong aversion for "extremes" in skin complexion. There is a noticeable difference, however, in the responses of the boys and of the girls. While both sexes strongly favor brown skin as the "best color to be," the male respondents are much less preoccupied with light skin and have less aversion to black skin than do the female adolescents. For example, although 8.1 percent of these youth adjudge their own color to be of light skin, 35.6 percent of the females and only 18.3 percent of the males would choose light complexion as the "best color to be." As regards the color they would "like least to be," none of the male respondents selected brown skin, and only 1.1 percent of the females have a repugnance for the color. By far the majority of both sex groups selected white as the color they would "like least to be,"—61.3 and 46.1 for the boys and girls, respectively.

When the color data obtained from 417 boys and girls residing in all-Negro communities are compared with some of the raw data collected by Charles S. Johnson⁶ in the Negro Youth Study, several significant differences in color motivation

are found between all-Negro youth and those residing in southern bi-racial societies. In the first place, it is noted that youth living in southern bi-racial societies have a tendency to estimate their own color much lighter than those residing in the all-Negro society. For instance, almost 60 percent of Johnson's sample rate themselves to be lighter than brown skin, while less than 10 percent of the all-Negro youth conceptualize themselves as having light skin. Moreover, less than 20 percent of the youth studied by Johnson estimate their color as darker than brown skin, while 45.5 percent of the youth in the all-Negro sample adjudge themselves as darker than brown skin.

A second difference indicated by the color data from the two samples is the strong preference for light skin on the part of Johnson's group, and the forceful selection of brown skin by the all-Negro young people. There is an overwhelming desire for brown skin by the latter group, while those in the bi-racial society are little more than "lukewarm" for brown skin.

A further distinction is suggested from the fact that such a large percentage of the all-Negro Youth—61.3 percent for the boys and 46.1 percent for the girls—choose white as the "worst color to be." The youth in Johnson's sample, on the other hand, who choose white as the least desirable color, constitute about one-half of this percentage for males and females, respectively. Another suggestion which seems relevant at this point is that in both samples and for rural as well as urban youth in Johnson's sample, the male adolescents possess greater antipathy toward being white than do the females. This supports John Dollard's⁷ theory of the caste frustration of Negro men because of what Dollard claims is the Negro male's feeling of a sexual gain by white men. This detestation for white skin appears to be even firmer among all-Negro youth.

Thus, from the foregoing materials and analyses, it becomes apparent that color is an important criterion influencing one's position in the social structures of both bi-racial and all-Negro societies. Not only is one's social status affected by color, but also one's personal characteristics are related and affected by this phenomenon. Thus, color is just as important to Negroes living in racially homogeneous communities as it is to those residing

⁶ Charles S. Johnson, Fisk University, furnished controlled data from his files for this investigation. The above refers to the color preferences of 398 Negro youth residing in a southern bi-racial society, Davidson County, Tennessee.

⁷ John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937), ch. 7.

in bi-racial communities. However, color in the all-Negro society has its own functions, values, and symbols which are different from those of the larger culture. Accordingly, individuals with advantageous Caucasian bodily marks in the larger society will not necessarily be assigned high value and prestige in the all-Negro society.

FAMILY PATTERNS

The all-Negro society was established as a "family society." During the promotional stage of the organization of all-Negro communities, the scouts and advertisements sent out by the founders appealed to families to move to the "New Eldorado." This was done by stressing the desirability of purchasing lots and farm units within the area for family settlements. There were very few attractions to entice the adventurer, the prospector, or very many unattached individuals; consequently, people who moved into these new racially homogeneous frontier towns came in family units. In not a few instances, the male head would go before his family, sending for them as soon as the necessary provisions could be made.

What all this means is that the early family movements into the new society involved highly stable patriarchal families. This also indicates that strong family sentiments are deeply embedded in the ideology of the society. So strong, in fact, are these family sentiments that many family patterns found to be common among southern Negro families are, in most instances, not sanctioned by the residents of the all-Negro society. For example, common law marriages have never been approved nor tolerated. On the other hand, Charles Johnson has shown that common law marriages, illegitimacy, and unmarried motherhood are so common among classes of Negroes in the bi-racial societies in the "Black Belt," that they are not even adequate indices of family disorganization.⁸

This sharp difference between the societies in respect to family sentiments is revealed by traditional family mores of the "Black Belt." In these societies, and especially among lower class families, a pattern similar to that of slavery still persists. Extra-martial relations are common, and illegitimate children are no barriers to mar-

riage. There is, moreover, a strong matriarchal pattern, and the dependability of the Negro woman is complemented by the "irresponsibility" in the man. By way of contrast, in the all-Negro society, extra-legal relations are frowned upon. Illegitimacy is not tolerated, and the unmarried mother is stigmatized and in certain instances ostracized. The strongest bourgeois value centers about the imperativeness of a legal marriage before procreation. Social condemnation follows child bearing without benefit of clergy, and husbandless childbearers are banished from the social activities of the society, especially those of the church.

Another sharp difference in family patterns between the societies concerns child development. Negro family patterns in southern bi-racial societies must be structured so as to teach its children the various roles they must assume in their relations with the dominant caste. Children are taught defensive and compensatory behavior, and when and how to strike back. Middle class parents are positively apprehensive for their children lest they fail to learn the proper social behavior. Many parents even fear reprisals which may be taken against them for mistakes made by their children. Accordingly, great care is taken by parents in teaching children to "stay in their places," in order to shield them from the humiliating experiences of the caste system.⁹ In the all-Negro society, on the other hand, parents do not have to circumscribe the behavior of their children. They are given the full run of the community. Many of the experiences reported by individuals in their childhood development in all-Negro communities reveal that they were afforded unlimited freedom to play and participate in community activities. Moreover, some of these experiences recalled by them would have been serious offenses against the white caste in the larger society and the child and family might have been held accountable and punished.

The basic family pattern of the all-Negro society is gradually taking the form followed by Negroes in the larger bi-racial society. Regardless of this fact, however, the society remains fundamentally a "family society" with patriarchal and conventional patterns. The persistence of these strong middle class family sentiments will depend upon the effectiveness of the resistance offered by the

⁸ Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1941), pp. 59-63.

⁹ See Robert E. Sutherland *Color Class and Personality* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1942) ch. 5.

residents against the secularization of their family institution. One can safely predict that as long as the all-Negro society maintains a high degree of isolation from the outside world, conventional family patterns will be sanctioned, keeping them different from those of the larger bi-racial society.

POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL PATTERNS

The political and educational structures of the all-Negro society are so closely related that they can be considered together. The residents are highly sensitive to the subjects of politics and schools. One gets astounding emotional reactions as soon as either topic is brought to their attention. Moreover, it is within politics and schools that numerous informal groups and voluntary associations are to be found. Clique formations are numerous and factions and rivalries are deeply rooted. Outside the family, the persons who interact most frequently, those who go out together, and those who have the greatest number of reciprocal obligations which cement the bonds of intimate association, are most likely to be engaged in political or educational activities.

It is, however, the political structure which is coterminous with the total society. Accordingly, the residents place major emphasis upon political activity. The political structure serves to connect and integrate the segmental substructures, such as family, economic, religious, and educational institutions.

Similar to the governmental structure in the larger culture, the political organization in the all-Negro society is a hierarchy of career politicians. At the top of the heap is usually a political "ring" or clique which has control over the entire governmental structure.

The most distinctive feature of the political organization of the all-Negro society concerns the degree of political participation. The residents of the all-Negro society are more conscious of political problems than those living in bi-racial societies. For example, an average of 71.6 percent of the total population in five all-Negro communities are registered for voting. This percentage score is extremely high and should be considered in the light of the fact that the Election Clerk must keep the names of persons active for voting until they have failed to vote in four consecutive elections. Thus, some names of persons who are deceased or who, for some other reason, no longer reside in the communities, are carried on the books.

When it is remembered, however, that the Negro masses in southern bi-racial communities are generally not interested in voting, the data become vastly important. They indicate, upon a comparative basis, that the residents of the all-Negro society participate more actively in governmental affairs. Moreover, the data suggest differences in the amount as well as in the quality of political participation. It is not unusual to find as low as 20 percent of the Negro population registered for voting in many southern bi-racial communities. In "Old City," for example, there is almost no Negro participation in politics.¹⁰ Bertram W. Doyle, in commenting upon the limited political participation of Negroes in southern bi-racial communities, points out that the Negro masses look to the white man and feel out of place participating in politics. Furthermore, he says that "voting and participation in governmental affairs seem not to be in the mores of the Negro group."¹¹

Thus, it becomes crystal clear that there are significant differences, not only in degree, but also in kinds of political activities of Negroes in the all-Negro society and those residing in bi-racial societies. Although the political structure in the all-Negro society has developed by trial and error, the framework has been created almost entirely by Negroes. This furnishes tremendous ego gratification for the residents and they think of this as "our town," because "we run it." The majority of Negroes living in the larger society do not maintain such identifications. They seldom think with reference to their participation in government in this manner because their participation is likely to be systematically prescribed by the superordinate white caste.

As regards the educational institutions in the all-Negro society, undoubtedly an immense amount of interest is shown by the residents in the local school. In addition, it should be emphasized that the all-Negro society was established during the time that the doctrine of "equality of opportunity" (later to be popularized by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) was being propagated.¹² Most of the pioneer leaders were of the firm conviction that increased educational opportunities were basic to

¹⁰ Davis and Gardner, *op. cit.*, ch. 22.

¹¹ Bertram W. Doyle, *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), pp. 139-40.

¹² Myrdal, *op. cit.*, pp. 797-803.

the improvement of the Negro. Accordingly, it is in the traditional mores of the all-Negro society for the people to be favorable toward education.

The value placed upon education in the all-Negro society can be exhibited through the presentation of a few comparative educational indices. For instance, five all-Negro communities in Oklahoma possess an average of 4.2 and 4.8 elementary and high school teachers, respectively. With an average of 195.6 pupils, the average number of pupils per teacher is 22.1. On the other hand, for five racially mixed communities of comparable size and relative organization, the average number of teachers is only 2.4 and 1.8 for elementary and high schools, respectively. Although the average number of teachers of the latter is approximately one-half that of the former, the average number of pupils is 214, and the average number of pupils per teachers is 54.4, or more than double that of the all-Negro society.

Another conspicuous difference in educational indexes between these two samples is indicated through a comparison of the number of units of instruction approved by the State department of education. The average number of units of instruction for high schools approved by the State for five all-Negro communities is 18.1, while only 8 units are approved for the bi-racial communities.

In reference to teachers salaries, there are no teachers employed in the all-Negro communities receiving less than \$600.00 annually, while more than 2 percent of the teachers in the five bi-racial communities were receiving in 1943-44, less than \$600.00 for their services. The same general picture is revealed in the percentage of teachers receiving less than \$1200.00 annually. The all-Negro communities compensated only 23 percent of their teachers in 1943-44 with less than this amount, while the State of Oklahoma, and the five bi-racial communities paid 52 and 68 percent of their teachers less than \$1200.00, respectively.

The impact of World War II made it mandatory for many States, including Oklahoma, to issue emergency teachers certificates. Generally speaking, it can be assumed that teachers with emergency certificates are inferior to those meeting the standards maintained by the State. During 1943-44, in Oklahoma, 6.4 percent, and in the five racially mixed communities, 20.7 percent of the teachers were holding emergency certificates. By way of contrast, only 1.2 percent of the teachers in the five all-Negro communities held emergency

appointments. There is a multiplicity of factors contributing to these glaring discrepancies. Chief among these conditions, however, is the fact that the all-Negro society maintains in its mores, high value for the educational process. Thus, the establishment of "good" educational institutions becomes one of the basic objectives of the all-Negro society. Actually, many of the older citizens of the society point with pride to the fact that the first accredited high schools for Negroes in the Territory were located in all-Negro communities. These residents say that Negroes from the larger racially mixed communities relied upon their communities for the education of their children.

SUMMARY

A summary statement for this paper necessarily rests upon a re-examination of the controlling hypothesis employed in this analysis. It will be recalled that the basic postulate suggested significant differences in social structurings among Negroes who live in isolation from the direct influence of the dominant white caste, as compared with those Negroes who live accommodated in societies controlled by whites. In the light of the data and analysis presented in this discussion, and in the judgment of the writer, this assumption has been definitively validated. The following points are in substantiation of the hypothesis.

1. The all-Negro society is marked by an underlying equalitarian ideology which tends to make the members stress similarities rather than differentiations among them. This fact strengthens racial and social solidarity among the citizens.
2. There is almost a complete absence of lower-class frustration in the all-Negro society. Inter- and intra-class communication is facilitated by the equalitarian ideology.
3. Exploitation of the lower classes by upper class leaders is, of necessity, kept to the irreducible minimum in the all-Negro society, while in bi-racial societies, this is not the case.
4. There is a relative absence of a conflicting class struggle between upper and lower-class members of the all-Negro society as compared with a continuous struggle between upper and lower class Negroes in the larger society.
5. While bodily marks are important criteria influencing one's social position and prestige in the all-Negro society, they are more likely to be in relation to Negroid features rather than Caucasian characteristics as is the case in the larger society.

6. The all-Negro society is distinguished by the fact that it has highly selected families of the stable patriarchal rather than matriarchal type.
7. The fact that the political and educational structures have developed by trial and error and in

response to meeting specific social and psychic needs of the Negroes themselves, gives them a greater feeling of "belonging." It also furnishes ego gratification for the residents and grants them greater opportunities for full social participation.

